

Volunteers Needed for State Animal Response Team

DOVER – The Division of Public Health Office of Animal Welfare (OAW) is seeking individuals interested in assisting animals in emergencies and disasters. The OAW Delaware Animal Response (DAR) program is recruiting community volunteers for its Delaware State Animal Response Team (DE SART) and their specialized unit, the Delaware Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps (DE VMRC).



One-hour orientations will be held on the following dates and times:

- July 25, at 7:00 p.m., Edgehill Shopping Center, 43 S. DuPont Highway, Dover
- July 26, at 7:00 p.m., Sussex County Emergency Operations Center, 21911 Rudder Lane, Georgetown
- July 27, at 7:00 p.m., Paul J. Sweeney Public Safety Building, 3601 N. DuPont Highway, New Castle
- August 19, at 10:00 a.m., Office of Animal Welfare, 1901 N. DuPont Highway, New Castle
- August 20, at 11:00 a.m., Edgehill Shopping Center, 43 S. DuPont Highway, Dover
- August 20, at 2:00 p.m., Sussex County Emergency Operations Center, 21911 Rudder Lane, Georgetown

The DAR program's mission is to develop and implement preparedness, response, and recovery plans necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of domestic animals, and the people who own or have responsibility for animals during emergencies and disasters. DAR is looking for volunteers with various experiences and skills, including:

- Small or large animal care, handling, control, training, sheltering, or rescue

- First responders and others with experience in emergency preparedness and response
- Veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and veterinary assistants
- Persons interested in animal welfare and animal protection

“Volunteer orientations offer a unique opportunity for Delawareans to learn how they can support state and county efforts to keep animals, small and large, safe and protected during emergencies and disasters,” said Karen Clark, DAR Coordinator.

The DAR program was originally established in Delaware to meet the requirements of the groundbreaking Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act passed by Congress in 2006. This federal legislation was a direct response to lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina, when many people would not leave home without their pets and many pets had to be left behind by those who did evacuate. The PETS Act requires states to take into account the needs of household and service animals before, during, and after an emergency or disaster.

The DAR program provides the following services:

- Animal evacuation and transportation
- Animal search and rescue
- Animal emergency sheltering
- Veterinary medical support services
- Public information and preparedness education

Residents are asked to RSVP for the orientation sessions by contacting Karen Clark at (302) 242-3594 or email Karen.Clark@delaware.gov. For more information about the Delaware Animal Response program visit: <http://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/oaw/dar.html>.

A person who is deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind or speech-disabled can call the DPH phone number above by using TTY

services. Dial 7-1-1 or 800-232-5460 to type your conversation to a relay operator, who reads your conversation to a hearing person at DPH. The relay operator types the hearing person's spoken words back to the TTY user. To learn more about TTY availability in Delaware, visit <http://delawarerelay.com>.

Delaware Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of the lives of Delaware's citizens by promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations. DPH, a division of DHSS, urges Delawareans to make healthier choices with the 5-2-1 Almost None campaign: eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day, have no more than 2 hours of recreational screen time each day (includes TV, computer, gaming), get 1 or more hours of physical activity each day, and drink almost no sugary beverages.